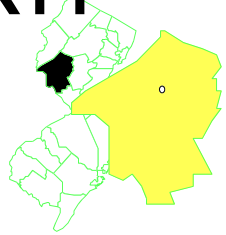
MYERS PROPERTY
NEW JERSEY
EPA ID# NJD980654198



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 12
Hunterdon County
Franklin Township

Other Names:
Elko Chemical Company

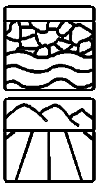
Site Description

The Myers Property site is located in a rural part of western New Jersey amid farmland and residential areas. In the 1940s, several companies used the 8-acre site to manufacture pesticides. The property was most recently used as a residence, and was purchased in 1992 by Atochem North America, Inc. (now known as Atofina Chemicals, Inc.), a potentially responsible party for the site. Several buildings, including a mill dating to 1827, were present on the site. When the site was first identified, various drummed chemicals, as well as uncontained asbestos, were present. The site is now fenced and unoccupied. Residents in the area obtain potable water from private wells; however, no drinking water wells near the site have been contaminated. Cakepoulin Creek, a trout production stream used for recreational fishing, runs adjacent to the site, and eventually drains to the South Branch of the Raritan River. Springs surface on the property and flow into the creek and through a wetland adjacent to the creek. The population of Franklin Township is approximately 3,000 people.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through EPA and potentially responsible party actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY
Proposed Date: 12/01/82
Final Date: 09/01/83

Threats and Contaminants



Highly elevated levels of contamination, including various volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and pesticides, have been identified in ground water; however, potable wells have not been impacted. Prior to their removal from the site, buildings were contaminated with pesticides. Contaminants in soil include pesticides, semivolatile organic compounds, metals (especially arsenic), and dioxins. Pesticides were also detected in on-site surface spring water samples, and part of the adjacent wetland soils are contaminated with DDT and arsenic. Trespassers on the site could come in contact with or accidentally ingest contaminants. DDT, one of the identified pesticides, also poses a substantial environmental threat.

Cleanup Approach

This site is being addressed in two stages: initial actions and a long-term remediation focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

Response Action Status

Initial Actions: In 1984, EPA removed visibly contaminated material for off-site disposal, including contaminated soil, drummed wastes, asbestos and debris. EPA installed a fence around the most highly contaminated areas in 1987 and posted warning signs at the perimeter of the site.

Entire Site: EPA completed a study of the nature and extent of contamination at the site in 1989. Based on the results of that study, EPA selected a remedy to address contaminated soil, sediments, buildings, and ground water. The multi-part remedy consisted of excavating soils and sediments, treating organic-contaminated soil by chemical dechlorination coupled with soil washing to remove inorganic contaminants, and backfilling the treated soil on site. The ground water remedy includes an extraction and treatment system to capture migrating contaminants. As a part of the remedy, ground water is being monitored to ensure it does not affect potable wells in the area, which are also being tested periodically as a precaution. The remedy also called for on-site buildings to be decontaminated or dismantled.

EPA entered into a Consent Decree with a Atochem North America, Inc. (now called Atofina Chemicals, Inc.) in February 1992, to implement the selected remedy under EPA supervision. Atofina is currently performing work as required by the Consent Decree.

Atofina's investigations revealed several site conditions which indicated that implementation of the selected soil remedy would not be successful. As a result, EPA has amended the remedy. An outline of the current status of the remedy follows.

Buildings Atofina dismantled the on-site buildings in late 1997. Because of the deterioration of the 1827 mill, it was not possible to preserve the entire structure. Working with the National Park Service and the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Atofina documented past use of the mill and property through photographs and architectural drawings to create a permanent record before the buildings were removed. Atofina was able to decontaminate and preserve the stone foundation of the historic mill.

Ground water A ground water extraction and treatment system has been installed to capture migrating contaminants and reintroduce treated water into the ground. This system will mitigate the contamination and prevent further migration that might threaten residential wells. No residential well has been affected, but they are sampled regularly to ensure that they remain safe. The treatment works has been placed in a newly constructed building on the old mill foundation, and Atofina has worked closely with neighbors to make the building fit aesthetically into the neighborhood. The ground water treatment system has been in operation since October 1999.

Soils Atofina performed additional sampling to refine the extent of soil contamination, and performed a number of treatability studies to analyze various technologies to treat site soils. Satisfactory results were found using a combination of low-temperature thermal treatment and chemical dechlorination for treating pesticides, dioxins, and other organics, however, soil washing treatment to remove arsenic was not successful. Because on-site treatment is not feasible, EPA has amended the soil remedy to include excavation and off-site disposal of contaminated soil. A Record of Decision Amendment, which modified the soil remedy, was signed in July 2000. The remedial design is complete with remedial action to begin in spring 2002.

Cleanup Progress  *(Actual Construction Underway)*

The removal of drummed wastes, asbestos, contaminated soil and debris, and the installation of a fence greatly reduced the potential for exposure to contaminated materials at the Myers Property site while further cleanup activities are being planned and implemented.

The building remediation was completed in January 1998, removing five buildings and miscellaneous surface debris. The ground water treatment plant began operating in October 1999. The soil remedy is now in the design phase.